

M. BUREAU, Resident Surgeon in Tong-King, has received orders to return to his post, and will leave Marseilles on Dec. 23.

In regard to the Chinese Telegraph Convention, instructions have been forwarded by the British Government to H. M. S. Minister at Peking to suspend any further action in the matter, and the case is, therefore, now in abeyance.

According to a Tientsin correspondent, the border dispute between the Chinese at Kirin and the Koreans is still unsettled, and neither side shows any signs of waiving their claims. The piece of territory in dispute is only about 500 li in area.

ANOTHER AFRICAN COMPANY.—We believe (says the *Liverpool Journal of Commerce*) it is intended to start a very large company for the purpose of developing the resources of West Africa. The capital is to be placed at ten millions sterling, and amongst the likely promoters are the Duke of Westminster and Mr. Stanley.

A few days ago a temple and a nursery situated in a thinly-populated part of South China were broken into and robbed of all the contents by a gang of bandits, who took no pains to conceal their intention before the robbery and defied the villagers when carrying away the plunder. With the near approach of Chinese New Year it is likely such high-handed robberies will be of frequent occurrence.

There is a great deal of sickness, much resembling influenza, in the province of Shanai among the Chinese as well as among the foreigners there—in fact, a general epidemic. The people, anxious to get over it as soon as possible, and hearing that by next Spring it will be over, they have in many places gone through the ceremony of "praising the New Year" hoping thereby to hasten its departure.—*Chinese Times*.

The new Naval College in Nanking is doing very well. The students selected from Shanghai and other places have been re-examined and divided into three classes. There are two departments, one for the instruction of the working of engines, and the other for the instruction of the crew. Foreign instructors have been engaged to teach naval science and three foreign-educated Chinese to instruct in English and the preliminary studies. Great expectations are centred in this new college, as the Nanyang squadron is sadly in want of good officers and men.

A LETTER in the official *Gazette* from Kuldja states that the Chinese on the Russian frontier are making great progress in restoring the old fortifications of the town of Kuldja, now called by the Chinese Yen-Yuan. An enormous fortress is nearly finished, with mud and brick walls 25 ft. high and 10 ft. thick, and 816 ft. in length, with a trench or moat 7 ft. deep and 16 ft. broad. The writer considers the structure very weak, notwithstanding its large dimensions, and avers that the walls already show large cracks in several places. Two battalions of Chinese troops are employed in the work, and 200 of the men, disarmed with two small pay for extra work, have deserted.

Those who read in our translation of the *Teikoku Gazette* of the 18th ult. the memorial describing the laying of the telegraph line through the river of Yunnan must have sympathized deeply with the sufferings of the party engaged in the work. The line was carried through a densely-wooded country under a blazing sun which caused intense thirst, while by night the men were obliged to camp out in the open and were continually disturbed by the howling of wolves and tigers. We can join in the horror with which the river Shwelen is regarded when we read that the feet of men and heads of horses drop off after contact with its waters, and we learn with dismay that the only means of crossing this deadly stream was on rafts constructed of coils of wire.—*N. C. Daily News*.

THE Nanking Anglo-Chinese College has been in existence now for four years and the scholars who attend it progress very rapidly in their studies. During the present year nine of the students have graduated and joined the Telegraph Service. The vacancies were quickly filled. The original intention was only to accept fifty boys, but the competitors for entrance were so numerous that it was found necessary to increase the accommodation of the school. There is one foreign professor, with two assistants who are foreign-educated Chinese, besides other native teachers who instruct in Chinese classics and essays. H. K. Lin, a native of the province, is in the direction of foreign and Chinese education, and he is well seconded by the manager of the College, who is a man endowed with much intelligence and liberal ideas.

THE *Siam Gazette* says—All His Majesty's Ministers are at Bangkok for weeks, and so the Government machinery is left to crack and groan along as best it can. The army is grumbling at the arrears in pay, the gendarmes having received nothing for the last eight months. The employees of the Customs House and Rice Department are in the same plight, having received no pay for the last four months. Probably the chiefs of these departments have their valuable time too much occupied in attending to their 'business,' or it is because the rice duty goes first to the Royal Treasury, and salaries come out afterwards. The police, one time a month without pay, are improving in this respect. But collectors are making fruitless demands and returning with empty cash boxes, receiving only promises of payment when the Court returns.

THE aborigines in Szechuan have at different times of the year committed depredations on the Chinese. As a rule they always retreat when the soldiers are sent in pursuit, and once among the thickets and mountain fastnesses it is dangerous and sometimes impossible to follow them, but of late they have become emboldened through the civil-disposed and discontented Chinese who urge them on and share their plunder. Several skirmishes have taken place. The soldiers always won on account of the superiority of their fire-arms. In the 7th and 8th moon the troops of aborigines, augmented in number by riotous Chinese, amounted to no less than several thousands. Devoted men followed their tracks. They were stopped in their course by a march by Chinese braves who were stationed on the top of a hill. A battle immediately ensued and the fight was desperate indeed. Relying upon their great number they rushed up the hill recklessly, but the cannon, the machine guns and rifles in the hands of the Chinese mowed them down with deadly precision. After struggling for hours to gain the position without success and losing over a thousand in dead and wounded the attacking party finally withdrew. When reinforcements arrived the Chinese braves took the offensive and utterly routed the aborigines and their Chinese allies. With the setting in of winter it is intended to send a large expedition to give them a severe chastisement. As the trees are stripped of their leaves, and this being dry are easily burned, their hiding places will be much exposed and it will be easier to discover and punish them.

SOME of the French papers are actually commencing to talk hopefully of Tong-King, and instead of the gloomy prognostications cheerfully forecasts are now made. The *Republique Francaise*, for instance, recently reviewed in a leading article the Customs reports from Mongolia and Lung-chow, and Mr. Allen's report on the trade of Peking, and quoted favourably from them for the future of Tong-King. It applauded M. Etienne, the Under Secretary for the Colonies, for the foresight he exhibited in pushing on the railway to Lang-sun, in view when this was done the waterway of Peking will not be directly connected with the railway, and it is by means of water carriage that the trade in the Chinese province will have to be carried on. There is no doubt, however, that with the completion of the railway, which is expected shortly, that the trade of Tong-King should receive an impulse. It is a question, of course, as to whether the French will be able to keep the French from quieting down to the future of the colony, and it is even spoken of as being one of the finest and most productive of French possessions.—*London and China Express*.

MONOMETALLISM WITH TWO METALS.

When in 1810 the wise men of England set the ball rolling that has landed in the modern absurdity of so-called monometallism, with two metals, the foreign trade bore a much smaller proportion to the home trade than now, when hardly a child even is unaffected by its fortunes. At a time when parish interests were the chief interest, it was natural for the wise men to consider them first; but were they living now they would doubtless be found tall enough to see over the parish hedge, that Englishmen are citizens of the world of commerce, and that what is best for the world of commerce is best for Englishmen. No doubt trade would go on with a clumsy medium of exchange, or even none at all, and houses would be built even were we to choose to return to implements of stone, but it should not be necessary at this time of day to argue that a medium of the greatest attainable stability in exchange is best value for the world.

For this a single metal, though not without disadvantages where payments are deferred, would be a far more convenient transaction; but there are two previous metals to deal with, which have both been in use by the world almost since history began. Suppose that silver was chosen as the single metal, the world's existing stock of gold destroyed, and all gold mines closed by Government fiat; with our recent experience can it be doubted that the owners of the gold mines would keep the world in confusion agitating for a re-opening, and remonetization? What the future may bring to pass is for prophets to say, but for the present, true, world-wide monometallism is only a dream of enthusiasts, and the question for practical men is how to attain the greatest possible stability in the relative value of the two metals now in use, that they may be as like a single metal as possible.

Considered as commodities, subject to the laws of supply and demand, the two metals differ from other commodities in that being imperishable, and usually retained in a readily exchangeable form, annual supply however exceptional has a less effect on the mass accumulated during centuries, than would, for example, a superabundant crop of wheat on a stock that is but the surplus of a few years' production at most. In addition, until recently both metals had, as standard money for the greater part of the world, a constant demand to still more steady their relative value; they were commodities wanted by everybody, all the time.

In former days, when the world's stock was comparatively small, and a communication between the countries less speedy than now, a shipment of gold or silver poured into a small market, sometimes, indeed, caused considerable fluctuations until the flood could be diffused and felt its level; and sometimes, then as now, foolish interference by governments interrupted the natural course of events; but except in such instances the exchange value of the precious metals, *inter se*, did not vary rapidly enough to seriously affect international commerce from the beginning of money till 1816, when England by demonetizing silver deprived it of the former demand, still provided for gold. Even then the fixed ratio, of France alone first and later of the Latin Union, notwithstanding a much greater proportionate increase meanwhile of the stock of gold than of silver—partly neutralized the effect of the unequal treatment till, nation after nation having followed the bad example of 1816, in 1874 the balance wheel was taken from the machine.

Up to that time during twenty or thirty centuries, with enormous fluctuations in the supply of the two metals, silver changed slowly from perhaps ten to one of gold, or sixteen; in less than twenty years after, with a comparatively trifling variation in supply, and the world's stock of silver by weight less in proportion to gold than in, say, 1850 (when the great gold discoveries began) so that it would be expected from that cause to have been dearer, but without the former demand, still provided for gold—silver has fluctuated rapidly between sixteen and twenty-two. Apparently, then, our present troubles are chiefly due to altered demand, not to altered supply; and the old demand should be restored. If England, and the United States, and Germany, and the Latin Union, and other great nations, had passed laws that cotton should no longer be used for clothing—its chief use—but only woollen, all the world would have expected cotton to fall, and woollen to rise in exchange value; but when they passed laws that silver should no longer be used as standard money—its chief use—but only gold, even eminent statisticians cannot see any connection between the cause and the effect! Moreover, if silver were cotton and gold wool—

len no one would blame the cotton man for not using wool for his trousers, or the wool man for having laws as inferior to those recommended; even if, in so striving, they caused excessive fluctuations in the relative value of the two commodities.

The natural result of these laws has been that the capitalists and merchants of the world, and at the mercy of the legislation, wine or unwise, of one silver-producing country. Even the bimetallic of the past centuries, with the steady effect of a constant demand for both metals but without the balance wheel of a fixed ratio, was at least better than this present absurdity of leaving the market to the balance wheel alone among the great nations, and why would not international bimetallic be the best that could be done under existing conditions for the world of commerce?

COMPETITIONS AT THE VICTORIA RECREATION CLUB.

These competitions were resumed yesterday evening in presence of a large number of spectators. The results of the events were as follow:—
Fencing, third heat, (Steward and Slade.)
Sword 1.
Semi-final, first heat, (Pry and Drury.)
Pry 1.
Final heat (Pry and Steward.)
Pry 1.
Gymnastics—Entrants, Sample, Pidgeon, Underwood, and Silva.
Sample (67 marks) 1.
Pidgeon (65 marks) 2.
Underwood (61 marks) 3.
Boxing, Light Weights, (Robinson and Taylor.)
Taylor 1.
Heavy weights (Laird and Stewart.)
Laird 1.

The fencing competitions formed a very interesting feature of the programme on this occasion. Steward and Slade were very evenly matched and a brisk encounter took place, each man scoring equally up to the last hit, which gave the victory to Steward. There was also a capital bout between Pry and Drury. Pry's cool way played proved in the long run more effective than Drury's impetuous style although at first the latter scored very rapidly. When the score stood 4, 2, Pry, a very decided change in the progress of the contest occurred. Pry, assuming the aggressive and playing his weapon with great coolness and skill until he got the three hits which won him the heat. In the final with Steward, Pry had a comparatively easy task, winning the competition in five style with five hits to his opponent's one. Of the two boxing events the first by a long way was that in which Robinson and Taylor were the competitors. Robinson, although evidently not in the best of form, showed a great capacity for effective hitting, and a wariness and resource in defence which left but few chances to his opponent. Taylor's game was very weak in the first round, his readiness in getting a head blow in the second round, and his readiness to give him the opportunity offered, made him an excellent match, and the merits of the two men were so nearly equal that after the three rounds prescribed the judges requested a deciding round of a minute's duration, at the close of which the first place was given to Robinson. Laird and Stewart were also well matched. Both men took very quietly to begin with, Laird having the advantage in the first round. In the second round Stewart showed more activity and skill, and just before time was called got in a few telling blows. 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